

THE MAGAZINE OF UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

SPRING 2009

# ACHiEVER



## VIEW FROM THE TOP



### DEAR FRIEND:

Most would agree that the past year has been a remarkable one on many fronts. In the United States, we have witnessed a historic election. On the world stage, we have watched in astonishment as bedrock fundamentals of our interwoven economies have shuddered, shifted, and realigned.

These are times that reward courage, vision, and creativity, and in this issue of *Achiever* we turn our attention to women and men who embody those qualities.

You'll meet Karren Pope-Onwukwe, a distinguished Maryland elder law attorney who rose to prominence, propelled by an unflinching willingness to embrace change.

You'll meet Jamie Samans, who decided that—despite a demanding career and lofty educational objectives—he could still find time to explore the far corners of the globe.

Finally, I think you'll enjoy a series of remarkable photographs by Paul Lattimore, PhD, a botanist by training who finds inspiration in the breathtaking beauty of Japan's Mt. Fuji.

That's in addition to the News Updates section, where you'll read about the things that are making headlines at UMUC—our new center of academic operations in Largo, Maryland; the brave women and men who are teaching our troops on the ground in Iraq; a remarkable exhibition by artist Joseph Holston exploring the historic and human impact of the Underground Railroad; and much more.

It's all in this issue of *Achiever*, along with the usual collection of Class Notes and Faculty Kudos, and I hope that, as you read through it, you'll be inspired, as I am, by the people around us who approach life and our ever-changing world with courage, with vision, and with creativity.

Sincerely,

SUSAN C. ALDRIDGE, PHD  
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## NEW “GREEN” CENTER OF ACADEMIC OPERATIONS TO OPEN IN LARGO

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

In August 2008, UMUC finalized the purchase of a new, 240,000-square-foot building in Largo, Maryland, which will ultimately house the Graduate School of Management and Technology, the School of Undergraduate Studies, Student Affairs, Information and Library Services, Career Services, Enrollment Management, Faculty Affairs, Instructional Services and Support, Security Studies, Department of Defense Relations, and the Center for Intellectual Property.

The university is retrofitting the building to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification as a “green” building, UMUC’s second. In 2005, the university made headlines when a 100,000-square-foot addition to its Inn and Conference Center was certified

by LEED as the first “green” hotel and conference center in the United States.

“This purchase is exciting for UMUC on a number of levels,” said President Susan C. Aldridge. “First and foremost, it resolves the many challenges that space limitations have presented as this university has grown through the years. Second, we are very pleased to establish a presence in one of Prince George’s County’s most dynamic and upwardly mobile growth areas. Finally, we are proud to continue our leadership in and commitment to environmentally responsible development and design.”

The building, which was initially the headquarters of the Hechinger Co., and more recently served the Raytheon Co., is situated on approximately 20 acres of land, boasts ample parking, convenient access to the Beltway and public transportation, and abundant meeting and classroom space to better accommodate staff, students, and faculty.

## UMUC CLASSROOMS OPEN IN IRAQ

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC opened its first classrooms on the ground in Iraq in November 2008, with six faculty members and two field representatives serving more than 150 military students stationed at Camp Victory, in Baghdad, or at Joint Base Balad, some 40 miles to the north. UMUC will offer more courses and deploy additional faculty and staff as demand dictates.

“This is an honor and privilege for UMUC and an important advantage for our military students, who can enroll with confidence, knowing that we’ll be there for them no matter where they are called to serve,” said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. “It’s a commitment we take seriously, and our 60-year history of providing quality education to men and women in uniform—in more than 20 countries currently—stands as a testimony to our success.



Allan J. Berg, director of UMUC Europe, at Camp Victory Education Center in Baghdad.

We are proud to be able to continue that tradition in Iraq.”

Each class enrolls up to 20 students, most of whom are in their 20s; subjects vary, from American Government and Introduction to Computer-Based Systems to Introduction to Psychology and Principles of Macroeconomics.

“Being among the first faculty to teach face-to-face classes in Iraq gives me more satisfaction, as a teacher, than anything else—especially since we started from the ground up, working to establish the Education Centers and helping spread the word that classes would be available,” said Mark Fisch, who teaches at Joint Base Balad. “The students are grateful that we are here and that, for a few hours a week, they can be off mission and engaged in pursuits that many others take for granted.”

Because of the risks associated with traveling in Iraq, each faculty and staff member is equipped with protective gear—including a Kevlar helmet and body vest—and undergoes extensive training, structured by the military,



UMUC’s new center for academic operations in Largo, Maryland, will be retrofitted to meet LEED Silver Certification as a “green building.”

which includes instruction on safety protocols, briefings about the culture and conflict, and even antiterrorism training. No combat-related faculty or staff casualties have been recorded in UMUC's long history of service to the military, despite the university's wartime presence in locations like Vietnam, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, and faculty typically characterize these assignments as among the university's most professionally rewarding.

The U.S. Department of Defense granted UMUC the education contract in May 2008 that called for the university to provide undergraduate and select graduate programs on the ground to troops stationed in Iraq and other countries within the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). Under an amendment to an earlier contract, UMUC was already teaching military students on the ground at several other CENTCOM sites.

## UMUC UNVEILS "COLOR IN FREEDOM," HOSTS SYMPOSIUM ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

"Color in Freedom: Journey Along the Underground Railroad," a visual narrative comprising more than 50 original paintings, drawings, and etchings by renowned Maryland artist Joseph Holston, premiered November 2, 2008, in UMUC's Arts Program Gallery in Adelphi, Maryland. In conjunction with the exhibition, UMUC hosted an educational symposium and gallery tour with the artist that



(Above) *Sun Warms the Freeman*, by Joseph Holston, from the fourth movement of the exhibit, "Color in Freedom." (Right) Joseph Holston in his studio.

examined the historical context, visual presentation, and cultural and social significance of Holston's provocative images. The university simultaneously unveiled a virtual tour of the exhibition.

Holston created "Color in Freedom: Journey Along the Underground Railroad" to capture the essence of courage and determination required by the millions who lived in slavery and who pursued the quest for freedom. Holston researched and created the remarkable collection over a two-year period with the goal of both inspiring and educating those who view the exhibit.

The exhibit portrays four stages of slavery and escape, which Holston has titled *The Unknown World*, *Living in Bondage—Life on the Plantation*, *Journey of Escape*, and *Color in Freedom*.

In conjunction with the exhibit, a daylong scholarly symposium on the Under-



ground Railroad featured presentations by John E. Fleming, author of *America I Am—The African-American Imprint*; Cheryl LaRoche, of Georgetown University; Cassandra Newby-Alexander, of Norfolk State University; Barbard Stephanic, of the College of Southern Maryland; and Richard J. M. Blackett, of Vanderbilt University. Together, they examined the historical context and cultural and social significance of

Holston's provocative images. The symposium culminated with a reception and gallery walk, offering participants the chance to meet the artist and experience Holston's work.

The exhibit, tour and symposium were cosponsored by the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora at University of Maryland, College Park.

For more about the exhibit, visit [www.umuc.edu/colorinfreedom](http://www.umuc.edu/colorinfreedom). Click the link to view the virtual tour.

## LEROY MERRITT CENTER FOR THE ART OF JOSEPH SHEPPARD TO OPEN AT UMUC

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC broke ground December 2, 2008, on a \$6.5 million, 5,500-square-foot gallery dedicated to the work of Maryland artist Joseph Sheppard. The gallery, slated to open in September 2009, was fully funded by private donations from Baltimore real estate developer Leroy Merritt and dozens of other friends and supporters of Maryland art and UMUC's Arts Program. It is slated to open in the fall of 2009.

The Leroy Merritt Center will represent an addition to the east side of the university's Inn and Conference Center. It will include a light-infused gallery and magnificent indoor sculpture garden, both opening onto a spacious reception area. The gallery will display Sheppard's paintings, on loan and in rotating exhibits, the first of which will include some of the more significant pieces from two of his most famous exhibi-





An artist's rendering of the Leroy Merritt Center for the Art of Joseph Sheppard, slated to open in fall 2009.

tions—"Fifty Years of Art" and "Beast of Burden." The sculpture garden will feature more than 20 of Sheppard's finest bronze and marble sculptures, which have been donated to the center.

"UMUC's collection of Maryland and international art is spectacular, and the addition of the Leroy Merritt Center for the Art of Joseph Sheppard will serve to cement its worldwide reputation," said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. "This beautiful addition to our existing galleries will stand as an enduring tribute to Sheppard, a vibrant center for lifelong learning, and a unique focal point for our acclaimed arts collection."

The design of the Leroy Merritt Center for the Art of Joseph Sheppard was influenced by Sheppard's own artistic interpretations and love for Italian architecture. The center will be equipped with mechanical systems designed specially to provide the climate controls needed to preserve the various works.

## UMUC SPONSORS MILITARY CHALLENGE AT THE NATION'S TRIATHLON

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC sponsored a race-within-a-race—the UMUC Military Challenge—at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Nation's Triathlon in Washington, D.C., September 14, 2008. Proceeds benefited the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Competitors swam 1.5

kilometers, biked 40 kilometers, and ran 10 kilometers through some of the District's most scenic areas and past historic landmarks, including the White House, Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and Jefferson Memorial. More than 500 military servicemembers competed in the UMUC Military Challenge, joining approximately

2,000 other competitors, including Adrian M. Fenty, mayor of Washington, D.C.

Kyle Hooker, Kenneth Corigliano, and Tyler Sharp took first, second, and third place, respectively. Samantha Bird, Amy Alexander, and Tiffany Hill finished first, second, and third, respectively, among female competitors.

"On behalf of University of Maryland University College, let me say how pleased and proud we are to have sponsored the 2008 Nation's Triathlon and the UMUC Military

Challenge race-within-a-race," said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. "At UMUC, we have a 60-year history of serving the educational needs of military servicemembers and their dependents, and we know firsthand the level of dedication and discipline that is typical of our men and women in uniform. It is an honor for us to spotlight their achievements in this year's race and to support all of this year's contestants, who inspired us with their courage and their commitment to achieving their goals."

## NEW ORKAND SCHOLARSHIP WILL AID MILITARY FAMILIES

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

A new, \$200,000 Orkand Family Military Scholarship Fund has been established to provide financial assistance to UMUC's military students and their spouses in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, as well as stateside. It will help cover the cost of textbooks for enlisted, active-duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces, as well as providing tuition assistance in the form of scholarships to spouses of enlisted, active-duty servicemembers. All awards will be need-based, renewable, and contingent upon the student maintaining satisfactory academic standing. The initial endowment will be disbursed over four years, but the fund will remain open to additional contributions.

"Given UMUC's long history of service to members of the military and their families, we are especially proud to announce the new Orkand Family Military Scholarship Fund," said UMUC President Susan C.



UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge with Kyle Hooker, first place finisher in the UMUC Military Challenge, part of the 3rd Annual Nation's Triathlon.

Aldridge. "It promises to lessen the financial burden on our brave women and men in uniform—and their families—and bring them one step closer to earning a valuable UMUC degree that will open doors and broaden horizons for years to come."

## UMUC STRENGTHENS TIES TO MARYLAND'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

In October 2008, UMUC announced an alliance partnership with Wor-Wic Community College in Salisbury, Maryland, that offers graduates streamlined access to several UMUC programs, including business administration, accounting, fire science, history, criminal justice, and environmental management. With the addition of Wor-Wic Community College, UMUC now has alliance partnerships with all 16 community colleges in Maryland.

"This alliance with Wor-Wic Community College is part of a continuing effort by UMUC to increase accessibility to education through the state's community college campuses and online programs," said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. "We are dedicated to helping provide both accessible and affordable four-year degrees to students in Maryland—no matter where they are located."

The partnership is designed to allow Wor-Wic graduates to transition seamlessly into a four-year degree program at UMUC while receiving full credit for the coursework they completed as part of their two-year degree. As a result,

students save both time and money.

The alliance will also offer students access to UMUC's extensive benefits and services, including access to University System of Maryland libraries, tutoring, writing assistance, career counseling, and computer labs. Students who choose to continue their stud-

ies at UMUC also have access to scholarship opportunities through the UMUC Maryland Community College Transfer Scholarship program.

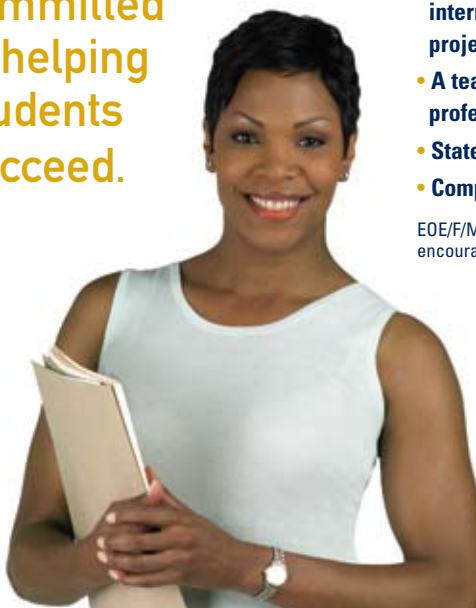
"This partnership with UMUC offers our students easy access to greater educational opportunities," said Murray K. Hoy, president of Wor-Wic Community College.

"The dual admission program and online offerings will provide our students with convenient alternatives to complete a bachelor's degree."

UMUC signed its first alliance agreement in 1996, and today more than 40 percent of the university's enrollment consists of transfer students from community colleges. ♦

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# ADVENTURES OF THE SPONTANEOUS TOURIST

BY ALLAN ZACKOWITZ

Jamie Samans proves that earning a few degrees, writing a book, working a full-time job, and serving in the U.S. Air Force Reserves doesn't mean that you can't find time to get away from it all.

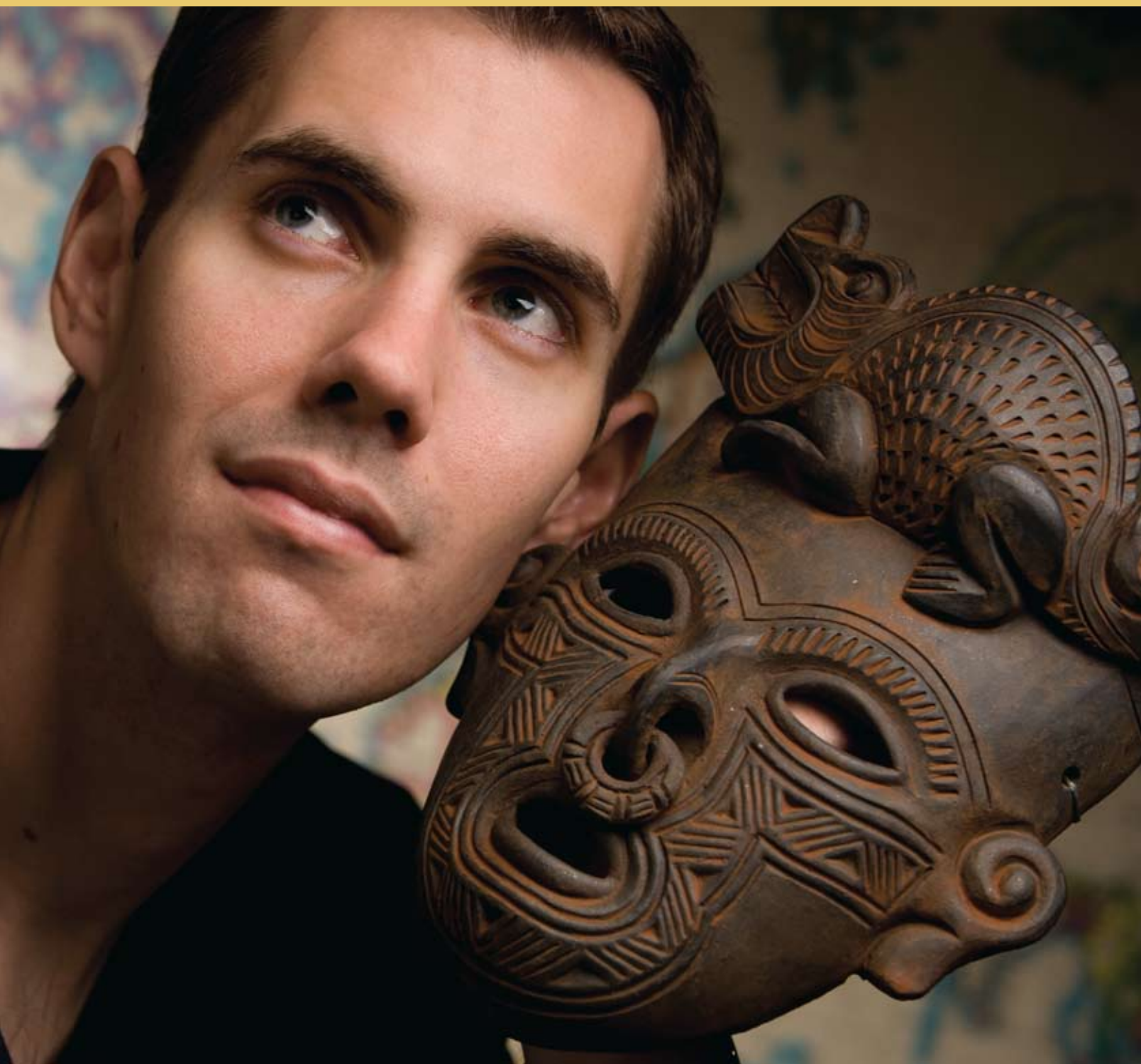
Every year, James C. “Jamie” Samans logs more than 200,000 travel miles a year, by plane, train, bus, and cruise ship. He holds elite member status with United and Continental Airlines, Amtrak, and several major hotel chains. Since 2005, this Arlington, Virginia, resident has visited every U.S. state and more than a dozen countries. That might not be unusual for a stereotypical “road warrior” who travels constantly for business. But Samans travels for fun.

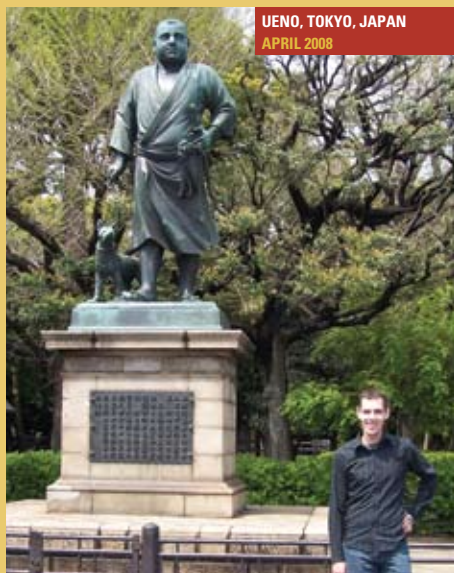
“When I started traveling in 2005, it was for work,” Samans said. Later that year, though, he saw an advertisement for a cheap fare to London, and even though he only had a weekend to spare, he decided to go. “It was a great decision, one that changed my life,” he said.

Samans was bitten—hard—by the travel bug, and the London trip was soon followed by weekend trips to New York, San Diego, New Orleans, Sydney, Zurich, and Singapore. He had made an important discovery: If you have the right skills, being busy doesn't mean you can't travel.

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UENO, TOKYO, JAPAN  
APRIL 2008



MONTREUX, SWITZERLAND  
MARCH 2006

And Samans is the poster boy for busy. After graduating from college in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in mathematical economics, he enrolled in UMUC's graduate program in management information systems. He enrolled simultaneously at the University of Delaware, earning a second bachelor's degree in computer and information sciences—all while working full time as a system administrator. Shortly after completing his second undergraduate degree in 2003, he was offered his first management-level position with Arrowhead Global Solutions, near Washington, D.C.

"There were several reasons that I was offered the job, including a security clearance and technical qualifications, but the fact that I was pursuing a master's degree at UMUC definitely played a role," Samans said.

He completed his UMUC master's degree in 2004 and soon moved on to a new management position as an information systems auditor for TWM Associates in the Washington suburbs. The new job required

that he travel to support the company's sales force, but it didn't tell him how.

"I started traveling, but I didn't know anything about it," said Samans. "Frequent flyer and other reward programs, getting the best fares, what to expect from different airlines, passports, and visas—it was all new to me. So I drew on my 'continuous learning' inclination to start figuring it out, and as I learned things, I was surprised to realize that most of my coworkers were virtually clueless about travel, too—especially about things like trains, buses, and how to get the most out of airline miles. And some of these people had been traveling for decades."



BADEN BADEN, GERMANY  
DECEMBER 2007



SINGAPORE  
AUGUST 2007



SORRENTO, ITALY  
APRIL 2007



TEL AVIV, ISRAEL  
NOVEMBER 2006



SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA  
MARCH 2006



JUNEAU, ALASKA  
OCTOBER 2006

That realization planted the seeds for Samans' second "career"—travel guru and author of *Spontaneous Tourism: The Busy Person's Guide to Travel* and the popular blog *Spontaneous Tourism: Blogging Around the World*.

It's not merely a hobby. Samans sees travel as vital for 21<sup>st</sup>-century Americans. Despite being in the enviable position of making decisions that fundamentally affect the rest of the world, most Americans that Samans saw around him had never been outside of the country. Their opinions were based on impressions they got from movies, hearsay, and political spin. Travel offers an antidote.

"Many people assume that travel takes a lot of time and costs a lot of money," said Samans. "Of course it can, but it doesn't have to. You can fit travel into almost any schedule and budget. People miss out on great travel opportunities because they don't understand their options."

Samans aims to change that in his role as the "spontaneous tourist." His book is introduced as "everything you need to know to start seeing the world one weekend at a





time” and covers how travel works to help people skip the beginners’ mistakes.

Since the book hit stores in fall 2007, Samans’ life hasn’t gotten any less hectic. He fields travel questions and offers tips on his blog. He still works and travels for the same suburban Washington firm as a full-time information systems auditor—and he recently completed his second UMUC master’s degree in information assurance. Now he’s enrolled in the university’s healthcare administration graduate certificate program. And for good measure, he recently started teaching GMAT prep classes part-time at a career institute in Virginia.

As if that isn’t enough, Samans also serves as a staff sergeant with the 512<sup>st</sup> Airlift Wing of the U.S. Air Force Reserves, and he’s recently been selected for a commission as a health care administration officer. To top it all off, he and his fiancée are in the midst of planning their wedding, scheduled for early 2009 in Philadelphia.

So what possesses him to cram so much into his days and nights? And, maybe more importantly, how does he find time

for all the vacation traveling he still manages to squeeze in each year?

“What I try to do is fit things in where they suit me. I set aside three- and four-day weekends as times to travel. I use the time on the plane or the bus to do work

**“I’ve written conference responses and uploaded assignments from airport lounges in Tokyo and Frankfurt, Web cafes in London, and hotel rooms in Bahrain.**

so that when I arrive, I can be fully where I am and enjoy the two or three days that I have there,” Samans said. “A side effect of such a busy schedule is that I’m very used to rapid change, and that makes a big difference at work. Some people panic when a new project comes up with a short deadline. I just figure how much time I need to spend, what else has to be moved, and get to work.”

Maybe the biggest challenge for Samans is picking a favorite from his many trips. He talks about Singapore, Sydney, Japan, Buenos Aires, and then admits, “Spinning it down is a little tough.” He also has a long list of places he looks forward to seeing someday, including India, Kenya, Botswana, Antarctica, and China.

It’s no surprise that Samans is a big fan of UMUC’s online courses. “I like the flexibility of online education,” he said. “I realized that I had a lot of time in my day but that it was hard to concentrate this time into large enough blocks for traditional education. Given access to the Internet, though, I could fully participate in an online program. What surprised me most was that this ‘study whenever’ approach meant that I was actually more involved in online classes than in most traditional classroom classes.

“I’ve written conference responses and uploaded assignments from airport lounges in Tokyo and Frankfurt, Web cafes in London, and hotel rooms in Bahrain. But even if I weren’t traveling, I’d be doing other things, things that take up time and make it difficult to commit to being in a classroom from 7:30 to 9:15 every Thursday evening. I did that for a year while I was at the University of Delaware—when I wasn’t traveling anywhere—and it was very hard to balance. Studying online means that I can study without giving up my life, and that’s extremely valuable.”

*Spontaneous Tourism: The Busy Person’s Guide to Travel* is available nationwide from popular bookstores and online at [www.spontaneoustourism.com](http://www.spontaneoustourism.com). ❖







# CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

For Karren Pope-Onwukwe—prominent elder law attorney, Maryland State Bar Association leader, and community activist—success sprang from a willingness to embrace change. This is her story.

BY ALLAN ZACKOWITZ

**W**hen Karren Jo Pope-Onwukwe flashes you her broad smile, reinforced by her twinkling dark eyes, it's probably easier to picture her as the high school teacher or flight attendant that she used to be than it is to see her as the well-known and politically connected lawyer she is today. But that infectious smile also hints at the intellect and courage that has guided her life, and once you hear her story, it comes as no surprise that her career path—though winding—has brought her to where she is today.

To understand just how remarkable a journey it has been, though, you must look back to 1974, when Pope-Onwukwe

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graduated from Eastern Kentucky University and went to work teaching high school social studies in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. At first, it seemed like a dream come true—working with young people and helping to shape the mid-1970s trend toward incorporating African studies into the American social studies curriculum. But Pope-Onwukwe soon grew frustrated by the lack of funding for education in general and by the fact that teachers had to lobby for basic classroom necessities.

“I thought it was outrageous for teachers to have to ask—beg really—for money in order to do our jobs,” said Pope-Onwukwe. “So, promptly after getting tenure, I quit—leading my family to worry about my decision-making capabilities.” She freely admits that it might not have been the wisest course of action, but it was too late to turn back. She needed a job. When she saw an ad in the *Washington Post* for flight attendants who could speak a second language, she parlayed her high school French into a very comfortable, 11-year career with Pan American World Airways, working some of the company’s most exciting and exotic routes. Then, in 1991, the venerable airline filed for bankruptcy.

Out of work once again, this time Pope-Onwukwe faced more challenging circumstances. She was now a single mother with a young son and a home mortgage, and the economy was in recession. For more than two years, Pope-Onwukwe was unemployed, and the future—both for her and her son—looked bleak.

But another advertisement in the *Washington Post* caught her attention—this one advertising the undergraduate paralegal studies program at University of Maryland University College (UMUC). Pope-Onwukwe went to a free seminar and learned about the field from graduates of the program. When an advisor explained that she could transfer credits from her teaching degree and earn her bachelor’s degree with a specialization in paralegal studies by completing just 30 more credits, Pope-Onwukwe once again decided that change was in order. But money was a problem.



**ABOVE: In 1996, Pope-Onwukwe met 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge (Ret.) A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., whose legal philosophy, she said, “captured the reason why I’m in the law.” ABOVE RIGHT: Pope-Onwukwe with President-Elect Barack Obama. RIGHT: Pope-Onwukwe with her son at her graduation from Georgetown University Law Center.**



**“I found that I didn’t just like it, I loved it. Reading case law was engaging, not boring. I was addicted to the law.”**

“At my first registration, I was crying as I wrote out a check for almost everything left in my account,” Pope-Onwukwe said. “The financial officer asked me what was wrong, and when I told him, he suggested that I check with the financial aid office.”

Pope-Onwukwe hadn’t considered financial aid, but she easily qualified for a scholarship that not only helped to prevent tears at future registrations, but also allowed her to take more courses each term. Once into the program, she got help from fellow students—most of whom were young legal secretaries trying to advance their careers—who were familiar with the workings of a law office, legal terminology, and computer technology, all of which was new to Pope-Onwukwe. And she was pleasantly surprised to discover that her UMUC professors, including the director of the paralegal studies program, were another important source of support as she tackled her class work, the UMUC Cooperative Education program, and that program’s required internships.

“UMUC staff and faculty always seemed to be reaching out to help,” said Pope-Onwukwe. “It changed my life. Calling to talk to a professor didn’t seem inappropriate. It was okay. UMUC allowed me to realize that I’m a thinking person.”

And it didn’t hurt that, from the very beginning, Pope-Onwukwe found the study of law to be a perfect fit.

“I found that I didn’t just like it, I





loved it,” she said. “Reading case law was engaging, not boring. I was addicted to the law.”

Pope-Onwukwe made the Dean’s List for two straight years while working at several different legal jobs to support herself and her son. She soaked up everything she could from other paralegals and lawyers on the job, finding valuable mentors along the way. At her first internship as a paralegal, she learned about estates and trusts from the head of the firm. When she moved on to an internship as a legal assistant at a larger firm, one of the attorneys was exploring a new area of law and took her to a year-long legal education seminar. There, she first learned about elder law, the legal specialty that would eventually become the focus of her career.

By the time Pope-Onwukwe graduated from UMUC with a paralegal studies specialization in 1993, it was clear to anyone paying attention that the future was bright. She was immediately accepted into Georgetown University’s Law Center.

“I skipped my UMUC graduation ceremony to go to law school registration,” she said. Over the next five years, she continued to work full-time while studying at Georgetown.

By the time she earned her law degree and passed the bar, Pope-Onwukwe was working as a law clerk in the Office of the General Counsel at the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. But there was one more threshold she needed to cross, and two years after graduating from law school she made the leap to private practice where she could pursue her passion for elder law. She opened her own offices in 2000.

As an expert in elder law, Pope-Onwukwe helps clients plan for aging, disability, and wealth transfer. But her influence reaches beyond her own clients to the county and state level, where she helps shape policy and future legislation. In 2008, she was elected president of

the Elder Law Section Council of the Maryland State Bar Association and co-chair of the Elder Law Section of the Prince George’s County Bar Association. She was appointed by Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley to the Maryland State Advisory Council on Quality Care at the End of Life. She has even taught elder law as an adjunct professor in the UMUC legal studies program.

Today, the walls of her modest Lanham, Maryland, office are crowded with plaques and photos that testify to her participation in worthwhile causes and commemorate her many honors and awards, including being named one of Maryland’s Top 100 Women for 2004. Most recently, her position as a Democratic National Committeewoman led to her election as a superdelegate from Maryland to the Democratic National Convention, where she voted to nominate Barack Obama as the Democratic presidential candidate.

Somehow, she finds time to teach American government to senior citizens through a Prince George’s County outreach program, and when a class member asked how she became a superdelegate, Pope-Onwukwe replied, “I’m always running my mouth.” Breaking into another conspiratorial smile, she added, “My political career started with the PTA at my son’s school, then the Hyattsville Education Committee, then the Democratic Central Committee. Seems the more you talk, the more they find something for you to do.” ♦

For more about Karren Pope-Onwukwe and her practice of elder law, visit [www.kpopeatty.com](http://www.kpopeatty.com).

**Despite a busy law practice, Pope-Onwukwe still finds time to give back to the community by teaching a class in American government to senior citizens through a Prince George’s County outreach program.**

# Light & Shadow

**PAUL LATTIMORE** came to Japan in 1992 to teach for UMUC. In the intervening years, his camera has been a constant companion, and Mt. Fuji a never-ending source of inspiration.



When Paul Lattimore's wife, Ruth, gave him a camera as a gift, he first used it to photograph his family and create slides for his botany and ecology classes. While the couple lived in Misawa, Japan—in the region known as Northern Honshu—Lattimore began to photograph the pairs of *shishi* lions or dogs that traditionally guard the entrance to Shinto shrines. The effects of weather and pollution make their facial expressions change over time.

Today, Lattimore lives in Fussa, about an hour by car from Tokyo. Much of his photography relates to botany and follows the seasonal appearance of flowers on the Kanto Plain. Plum trees blossom in January and February, followed by cherry trees (*sakura*), wisteria, azaleas, German Bearded irises, hydrangea, Japanese irises, and finally the magnificent Sacred Lotus blossoms.

Mt. Fuji, soaring 12,390 feet, offers artistic inspiration. Said Lattimore, "I really enjoy taking photos of Mt. Fuji at sunrise or sunset. Waiting in the predawn darkness for the 'twilight zone' that comes just before sunrise reminds me of times I spent squirrel hunting or fishing with my stepfather, Merrill Seabolt. The moments before sunrise seemed spiritual in the Pennsylvania woods, and I have those same feelings as I wait for the first rays of the sun to light up Japan's highest peak."



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**  
Mt. Fuji at sunrise with snow-covered boats on the shore of Lake Shoji

Mt. Fuji in twilight, before sunrise, from the shore of Lake Kawaguchi

The summit of Mt. Fuji seen through Japanese plume grass on the shore of Lake Kawaguchi

Mt. Fuji at sunset through a stand of Japanese plume grass near Camp Fuji (a military base shared by the U.S. Marine Corps and the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force)







**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**

**A room in Acre (‘Akká) prison, in Israel, where Bahá’u’lláh—founder of the Bahá’í faith—was imprisoned with his family 1868–70. Shadows like these acted like the hands of a clock, marking the passage of time**

**Tiled roof at the Haijima Diashi Temple, in Akishima, Tokyo**

**Statues of Jizo, the guardian of children, along the Ganman-ga-fuchi rapids in Nikko, Japan. According to folklore, the statues change places, never appearing in the same order twice**

**Japanese plume grass—also known as Japanese silver grass—blows in the wind near Camp Fuji**





# REMEMBERING 9/11

**O**n September 11, 2008, Stephen Holowenzak, senior program manager for faculty services and communication in UMUC's Office of Faculty Affairs, represented the university at the dedication of the Pentagon Memorial, which honors the lives of the 184 victims killed in the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon September 11, 2001. Earlier, on September 7, Holowenzak served as a team captain for the 2008 America Supports You National Freedom Walk, which drew an estimated 10,000 participants to a one-mile walk from Arlington National Cemetery to the Pentagon. The walk honors those who died in the September 11 attacks and those who responded to the emergency, and serves as a show of support for U.S. veterans, past and present.

Holowenzak carried an American flag on the walk, and he and his team escorted family members of those who died in the September 11 attacks. The annual walk, first held in 2005, has grown into a national and international event, with a reported 330 similar events held in 2008 in 50 U.S. states and 12 foreign countries.



Stephen Holowenzak, holding the flag, stands with members of his team prior to the 2008 America Supports You National Freedom Walk.



Holowenzak, who has worked for UMUC for more than 20 years, has a deeply felt connection to and respect for the U.S. military, having worked with military servicemembers from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines in more than a dozen countries, first as a collegiate professor of math, computer science, and education, and later as academic director of Education Services. When he returned to the United States several years ago, he sought to continue that support, and he has received citations and commendations for his efforts and achievements.

"I remember the moment that I heard about the September 11 attacks," said Holowenzak, who was in Japan at the time. "I wanted to be back there to help, but there was no way I could be there! In remembrance, I bought more than 100 American flags—one for each staff member in our Asian headquarters—and left them in a box with a note inviting people to take one. I remember how touched I was in the weeks after to see each office and cubicle with a tiny American flag in a show of solidarity and support. Years later, just before I came back stateside and to UMUC Adelphi, my flags were still present as a remembrance in many UMUC work areas and desks. So when I returned to the States and heard about the Freedom Walk, I thought, 'This is something I want to get involved in—for the victims, their families, and for our country. I can't tell you how pleased and proud I am to be a part of this tribute each year.' ♦



## FACULTY KUDOS

**JAY ALDEN**, who teaches in business and executive programs in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, published "Use of Wikis in Online Education Group Projects" in *Proceedings of the Association for the Advancement of Computers in Education (AACE) SITE Conference*, in Las Vegas, Nevada, March 2008. He published "Use of Wikis to Support Collaboration Among Online Students" in *Collective Intelligence and E-Learning 2.0: Implications of Web-Based Communities and Networking* (IGI, 2008).

**ANNA ANDRIASOVA**, a program director and collegiate professor in business and executive programs in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, published (with K. Gillespie) "Supporting Business Development: Armenia's Experience," in *Diasporas and International Development: Exploring the Potential* (Lynne Rienner, 2008). She presented (with J. Ross) "From Camaraderie to Learning: Improving the Classroom Experience with Learning Communities" at the Annual Conference of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, December 2008, in Baltimore, Maryland.

**THOMAS BAILEY**, academic director, psychology, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, was a keynote speaker (with Deb McLaughlin) at the Mid-Atlantic Teaching of Psychology meeting October 17, 2008, at Prince George's Community College, in Maryland, and at the McGraw-Hill Summit on the Teaching of Introductory Psychology, October 26–30, 2008, in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

**JOHN BEYERS**, academic director, mathematics and statistics, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, was elected president of the Maryland Distance Learning Association in July 2008 and was invited to present "Developmental Mathematics Online: Highlights and Hurdles," at the International Conference on Technology in Collegiate Mathematics in San Antonio, Texas.

**MURRAY BLANK**, who teaches in business and executive programs in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, presented "Teamwork in Online MBA Programs: An Evaluation of Best Practices," at the 14<sup>th</sup> Sloan-C International Conference

on Online Learning, November 6, 2008, entitled, "The Power of Online Learning: Improving Learning in a Networked World."

**ALAN CARSWELL**, chair of information and technology systems in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, presented "Instructor Practice, Course Content, and Student Outcomes in a Distance Education Environment," at the European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN) Fifth Research Conference, October 21, 2008, in Paris, France.

**CYNTHIA DAVIS**, associate dean, Academic Affairs, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, edited (with Verner Mitchell) *Western Echoes of the Harlem Renaissance: The Life and Writings of Anita Scott Coleman* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2008).

**LINDA DI DESIDERO**, acting academic director, communication studies and professional writing, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, published "Responding Effectively to Student Papers Across Disciplines: An Interactive Approach," in *The Distance Education Oracle*, September–October 2008. Earlier, in July 2008, she presented a paper, entitled "Usability as a Lens for Effective Grammar Comments on Student Writing," at the National Council of Teachers of English Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar, at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.

**MAUREEN ELLIS**, who teaches in business and executive programs in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, had "Records Management: Understanding Organization & Filing Systems," accepted for publication by NBEA Creative Teaching Ideas. She presented (with J. Dickerson, S. Schmidt, and E. Hodge), "Why On-Campus Students Take Online Courses: The Voice of the Student," at E-Learn 2008–World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education, November 17–21, 2008, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

**MICHAEL EVANCHIK**, associate dean and collegiate professor in UMUC's MBA program in the Graduate School of Management and Technology, copresented (with Joseph Martin Stevenson) "Doctoral Programs as

*continued on page 20*

## FACULTY KUDOS

*continued from page 19*

a 'Blue Ocean' Strategy for Continuing Education" at the annual meeting of the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA), March 26–29, 2008, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

**ROBERT GOODWIN**, associate chair and collegiate professor in UMUC's MBA program in the Graduate School of Management and Technology, was invited to present "Doing Business in the United States" at East China Normal University in Shanghai, March 17, 2008.

**CHRIS HANNAH**, a program director and collegiate faculty member, in UMUC's MBA program in the Graduate School of Management and Technology, was named an outstanding reviewer in 2008 by the Management Education Division of the Academy of Management. In August 2008, she copresented "Innovative Approaches to Teaching International Management" at the 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in Anaheim, California.

**ANN HERD**, a collegiate professor in UMUC's MBA program in the Graduate School of Management and Technology, presented (with M. Crocitto, J. Haber, C. Tunwall, and C. Carnevale) "Trends, Transitions, and Technology: Best Practices in Online Learning," as part of a symposium at the 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, August 2008, in Anaheim, California.

**KATHERINE HUMBER**, academic director, gerontology, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, presented (with Darlene Smucny) "Using Controversial Topics as an Effective Teaching and Learning Tool in the Online Classroom," at the ITC Professional Development Audio Conference, October 21, 2008.

**LISA KAHN**, assistant dean, communication, arts, and humanities, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, published (with John Wissinger), "The Colors of Clay: Special Techniques in Athenian Vases at the Getty Villa, June 15–17, 2006," in *Recreating and Firing a Greek Kiln* (J. Paul Getty Museum, 2008), edited by Kenneth Lapatin.

**CHARLES S. "STEVE" KNODE**, a program director and collegiate professor of business and executive programs in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, presented "Simulation and Teaching Leadership" at the Society for Advanced Learning Technologies (SALT) Conference, February 20–22, 2008, in Orlando, Florida. In June 2008, he presented the keynote address at the Association for Small Computer Users (ASCUE) conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

**LES LIVINGSTONE**, a program director and collegiate professor in UMUC's MBA program in the Graduate School of Management and Technology, published *The Economics of Energy* (Lulu.com, 2008). He also co-edited and authored three chapters in *The Portable MBA in Finance and Accounting*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. (John Wiley & Sons, 2009).

**SABRINA MARSCHALL**, assistant dean, Center for Student Success in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, presented (with Megan Hurley) "Alcohol and Learning: A Risky Combination" to the Association of Teacher Educators, August 4, 2008, in Washington, D.C. In October 2008, she presented "Laying the Foundation for Success: Providing Engagement at All Developmental Levels," at the College of Southern Maryland, in a conference entitled "Promoting Student Success—The First Year and Beyond."

**DEB MCLAUGHLIN**, academic director, science and environmental management, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, served as part of Scientific Review Group ZRG1 BBBP-D Developmental Disabilities, Communication, and Science Education, June 2008, at the National Institutes of Health. Later, she was a keynote speaker (with Thomas Bailey) at the Mid-Atlantic Teaching of Psychology meeting, October 17, 2008, at Prince George's Community College, in Maryland.

**JOHN VOLPE**, assistant dean, business and professional programs, in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, authored a study entitled "Economic Cycles and Charitable Giving" that was discussed in approximately 50 U.S. newspapers (both print and online), trade journals, and television news outlets nationwide.

1990s

## Jeffrey W. Harris '94

Harlingen, Texas, is a technology director with Weslaco ISD in Weslaco, Texas. In 2005, he earned his MEd in educational technology from the University of Texas–Brownsville.

## Mina Stewart '96

Fairfax, Virginia, was selected as the 2008 Woman of Color Honoree in New Media/IT Leadership at the 13th National Women of Color (NWOC) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Conference, October 2008, in Dallas, Texas. The conference was sponsored in part by *Women of Color* magazine and the IBM Corporation. The awards are designed to recognize the accomplishments of women of color in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), whose contributions often go unrecognized. Award honorees were chosen for leadership, innovation, and outstanding work in STEM fields.

## Jim B. Golden '98

Rockville, Maryland, is president and CEO of Golden Opportunity, Inc., an award-winning learning and organizational development firm. He received one of the coveted Top 100 Minority Business Enterprise Awards, which highlight the achievements of minority and women business owners in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The annual awards are cosponsored by UMUC, the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs, and Southwest Airlines. This year saw a record 1,400 nominees. Golden also recently attended and completed an executive business program at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth in Hanover, New Hampshire. He has taught computer studies courses at UMUC since 1999 and began teaching communication courses in 2009.

## Mendi Carroll '99

Muncie, Indiana, who earned a bachelor's degree in business and management from UMUC's Europe Division, is pursuing a master's degree in speech and language pathology from Ball State University. She was one of two Ginger Miller Higher Education Scholarship winners in 2008.



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**2000s** **Jay Michael Gloede '04**  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is office manager and assistant to the vice president of human resources at SCA Philadelphia, part of the global consumer goods and paper company SCA. He participated in an initiative that led to SCA Philadelphia's headquarters winning a 2008 Livable Building Award from the Center for the Built Environment (CBE), an organization that focuses on research and technology development for more environmentally friendly and livable commercial spaces. CBE—part of University of California, Berkeley—describes the award as “a mark of distinction for commercial buildings,” awarded for buildings that “demonstrate exceptional performance in terms of occupant satisfaction, resource efficiency, and overall design.”

#### **Ruth Fisher '07**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, launched Complete Definition Image Consulting, LLC, in March 2008, in partnership with Stella Williams. The company is a full-service image consulting firm providing personal, professional, and social image consulting services to women, men, and businesses. Services include style analysis, coaching, color analysis, wardrobe building and refinement, personal shopping, training sessions, and makeup artistry. For more information, visit [www.CompleteDefinitionImage.com](http://www.CompleteDefinitionImage.com).

#### **David Leipnik '07**

Alexandria, Virginia, is a certified public accountant (CPA) and works for Gross, Mendelsohn & Associates in Baltimore, Maryland, in the firm's tax department. In August 2008, he was promoted from entry-level accountant to semi-senior accountant.

#### **Frank Goldfield '08**

Braddock Heights, Maryland, worked for four years as a massage therapist while earning a degree in marketing from UMUC. Recently, he opened My Red Bow Spa Treatments in the extensively renovated Washington Cottage, which dates to 1904 and originally served as a boarding house and popular retreat for politicians who wished to escape the heat of Washington, D.C., during the summer. The property offers a scenic view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. For more information, visit [www.MyRedBow.com](http://www.MyRedBow.com). ♦

## 2008 PRESIDENTIAL AWARD WINNERS

Three UMUC outstanding UMUC employees were honored in 2008 with Presidential Awards, which recognize extraordinary accomplishment and performance by a member of the university's staff or collegiate faculty. Nominations are accepted from supervisors, colleagues, and students, and are reviewed by committee. Each recipient receives a personalized plaque and a check for \$5,000.

**BETSY ALPERIN**, assistant dean in the Graduate School of Management and Technology, has served UMUC for more than 15 years. She was cited for streamlining the faculty appointment process; helping design, develop, and author the content for WEBT101 (the WebTycho orientation class); collaborating on projects designed to enhance faculty-student relations; and much more. According to one nominator, Alperin "brings energy and enthusiasm, as well as expertise, hard work, and dedication to daily tasks and special projects alike. Service to others is what drives [her] and makes her the fine person she is."

**TONI SEPEDA**, collegiate professor of English and art history for UMUC Europe, has served the university for more than 30 years. At Aviano Air Base in Italy, she teaches a wide variety of on-site courses and counsels students in her programs. She was praised for her inno-

vative approaches to teaching, which include the UMUC Europe Field Study program that she helped create. The program immerses students in the culture and history of locations like Paris, Rome, and Venice. One of her nominator's wrote, "Dr. Sepeda's insatiable passions for literature, art, and travel . . . are immediately and wonderfully transferred to any student in her classroom."

**GINA SCHMIDT-PHILLIPS**, director of institutional research for UMUC Europe, has been a UMUC staff member for more than 40 years. She was cited for bringing efficiency, improved operations, and a consistent focus on customer service to her roles at the university, and credited—among other things—with creating the Field Representative Operating Manual, developing and implementing a training program for new advisors, serving as project lead for UMUC Europe's PeopleSoft implementation, and playing a key role in the university's successful CentCom contract bids in 1998, 2003, and 2007. Her nominators praised her institutional knowledge, expertise, leadership ability, work ethic, and dedication, and one added, "I have no doubt [her] firm but gentle guidance results in increased productivity, and staff who are loyal, appreciative, and willing to put in extra effort because they value [her] support and vision."

### JACQUELINE KOHN '99

San Diego, California, was recently promoted to the position of vice president, human resources, for Solatube International, Inc., the worldwide leading manufacturer and marketer of tubular daylighting devices (TDDs). In addition to leading human resources functions for Solatube International's North American business unit, Kohn will play a key role in building a global workforce to support the company's rapid expansion into China and Asia.

Kohn joined Solatube in 2001 and most recently served as director of human resources. She is responsible for providing HR leadership strategies to support Solatube's business goals and corporate culture. She creates, directs, and manages all of the company's human resource functions, including employee relations, management consulting, talent acquisition, organizational development, training, and



legal compliance, as well as compensation and benefit design and implementation.

"It is not possible for us to succeed in this dynamic business environment without the best teams in place at every level of the organization," said Robert E. Westfall Jr., president of Solatube. "Jackie's expertise in identifying, hiring, managing, and nurturing top talent will continue to provide us a competitive advantage as we tackle new challenges and explore new opportunities."

Prior to joining Solatube International, Kohn was a human resources/operations manager with BeXcom Research, a U.S. operation of a Singapore-based Internet

software company.

Kohn earned her bachelor's degree in business and management from UMUC and holds Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and Global Professional in Human Resources (GPHR) certifications.



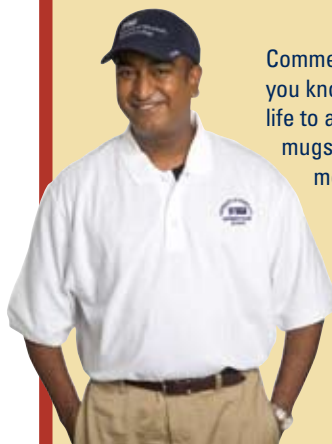
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## 1 Enhance Your Personal and Professional Development

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**February 16–27, 2009** **UMUC Career Services Virtual Job Fair**  
(FREE to UMUC alumni)

**March 28, 2009** **2009 Spring Symposium**  
**Charting Your Course: Career Success in Today's**  
**Diverse Workplace (\$25 for UMUC alumni)**

UMUC alumni save 5 percent on programs offered by UMUC's **National Leadership Institute (NLI)**. NLI is a network associate of the **Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)**, the preeminent organization devoted to leadership research and education.

## 2 Expand Your Professional Network and Make Lasting Connections

Join [UMUConnect.org](http://www.UMUConnect.org)—a secure online community with a searchable online directory, discussion forums, links for professional networking, and information about upcoming events.

## 3 Help UMUC Students Achieve Their Academic Goals

Your Alumni Association provides a growing network of volunteers who offer their time and energy to mentor and network with current and future students. Share the fruits of your UMUC experience and give students the confidence they need to achieve their education goals by participating in one or more of the following student support activities.

- ◆ **UMUC 411** is an introduction to online learning in which alumni volunteers can help answer questions from current and prospective students.
- ◆ **Alumni Ambassadors** welcome students to on-site classes in College Park, Maryland.
- ◆ **Allies Mentoring Program** gives alumni volunteers the opportunity to mentor new undergraduate students as they transition to UMUC.
- ◆ **School of Undergraduate Studies Academic Clubs** meet online through WebTycho and allow alumni to play a key role by providing testimonials about their academic and professional experiences and by actively participating in the various discussions posted within the clubs.

Visit [www.UMUConnect.org](http://www.UMUConnect.org) to become a mentor today!

## 4 Maximize Your Leadership Potential

UMUC's Alumni Association offers a perfect place to build your leadership skills and grow your network of professional contacts. Sign up today by visiting [www.UMUConnect.org](http://www.UMUConnect.org).

- ◆ **Serve on an Alumni Association planning committee.** Committees meet monthly to plan and help implement activities that support the goals outlined in the Alumni Association's strategic plan. Committee members serve a one-year term and may choose to serve additional terms. They are also instrumental in selecting new members for the Alumni Association Board of Directors.
- ◆ **Share your expertise with the UMUC community.** Serve as a mentor, speaker, or workshop presenter.

## 5 Enjoy Special Discounts and Services

Your membership in the UMUC Alumni Association entitles you to a host of valuable discounts and benefits.

- ◆ Receive a special 5 percent alumni discount on **National Leadership Institute (NLI)** programs.
- ◆ Receive discounts on **UMUC merchandise**.
- ◆ Receive up to 8 percent in additional discounts on auto insurance through the **GEICO auto insurance program**.
- ◆ Join the **State Employees Credit Union of Maryland, Inc. (SECU)**.
- ◆ Receive discounts on rooms and meals at the **UMUC Inn and Conference Center by Marriott**.



I joined [UMUConnect.org](http://www.UMUConnect.org) to leverage the power of social networking with fellow alumni who share similar interests. I am a military spouse, and I've been able to connect with other people who share common goals. Kudos to UMUC for facilitating a more globally connected organization by providing this valuable platform for alumni. This has been a great tool for finding the people with whom I need to network."



PAMELA STOKES EGGLESTON '01 & '03  
PRESIDENT, UMUC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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